

CAREER CONSTRUCTION I: CONSTRUCTING OUR CAREERS



What is it?

Choosing our major, selecting which jobs or internships to apply to, and thinking about what we might like to do with our lives feels hard! If you are trying to make some decisions and feel stuck, it may be helpful to know a little about career construction.

Developing personal narratives and constructing our career is a method to help us understand ourselves, uncover meaning in our lives, and cope more effectively with challenges.

Understanding whom we value as role models growing up may help us foster greater self-knowledge regarding what we value, what we aspire to, and what we may expect for a future career.

Reflect

Take some time to self-reflect and consider the following questions. Jot down your answers.

1. List 3 role models from when you were young. (Role models may be actual people in your life (e.g., family, teachers, friends), characters from TV shows, movies, or books, Podcast/TikTok personalities, etc.). **Some questions to help you identify these persons include:**

- Whom did you admire when you were young?
- Who were your heroes/heroines?

2. What do you admire about each of these role models? (e.g., qualities such as outspokenness, kindness, cleverness, etc.).

3. In which ways are you different?

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Put Into Practice

Reviewing our responses to these questions can help us to identify characteristics that may be important to us. In considering your answers to the above questions, you may notice patterns that help you identify qualities that you admire or strive toward.

For example: Did you describe a character in a book who was clever and used it to solve problems? Or maybe you described a former teacher who had a loving and supportive presence in your life?

Such answers also may help pinpoint values that you express in a career; perhaps you value problem-solving and solving difficult challenges in a career, or perhaps you value warmth and presence.

Similarities you noted between and among your role models and you may represent ways that you embody and identify with your role model. Differences may represent choice points – perhaps ways that you've chosen intentionally to be different in order to move toward some underlying value, want, interest or need.

As you wrap up, consider the possibilities:

1. What does this information tell you about what you like?
2. What does this information mean to you?
3. What does it suggest to you about the type of person you want to be at work and in life?

Was this helpful? We encourage you to print or download our toolkits for your future reference!



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Sources

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